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ABSTRACT

When archaeologists dig up the artifacts of ancient civilizations, they make discoveries and attempt to find out what life was like for ancient people. Students in the classroom explore the civilizations of the ancient world attempting to answer questions about how people lived thousands of years ago. In this activity for grade 6, students, in small groups, study the structures of ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China to plan a presentation to the Ancient World Architectural Review Board (AWARB) about their conclusions. AWARB will ask for information and opinions on six questions. The activity provides a step-by-step process; lists extensive resources; gives learning advice; addresses evaluation; and discusses conclusion and reflection. The teachers notes section of the activity: states goals/purpose; addresses California history/social sciences standards, historical and social science analysis skills, and language arts standards; suggests activity length; notes materials needed; and discusses interdisciplinary connections. (BT)

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ED 472 011

Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE): Connecting California's Classrooms to the World

The Ancient World Explorer

Space Invaders, Copycats or Independent Inventors

Sixth Grade Activity
by Ty Benoit

SO 034 526

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http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/activity/ancientworld/

2002

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Dear Ancient World Explorer:

Have you heard about the meteorite which was found in Antarctica? Scientists are very excited about this discovery because it might mean that there was life at one time on the planet Mars. They are investigating the evidence carefully. When archaeologists dig up the artifacts of ancient civilizations, they make exciting discoveries too and try to find out what life was like for ancient people.

As you explore the civilizations of the ancient world, you will try to answer questions about how people lived thousands of years ago. It may be hard to answer every question because sometimes there is not enough evidence to support a conclusion. Historians may also look at the same evidence in different ways. Sometimes the experts have to change their answers as new artifacts are discovered.

In this activity, you will study the structures of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China. As you learn about these wonders of the ancient world, remember that there are many different ideas about why and how they were built.

Some people think that ancient people learned how to build these awesome monuments by aliens from outer space who were more advanced than earthlings. Others believe that one culture may have borrowed from other people on earth who already knew how to build. Still others think that people in these cultures created the monuments totally on their own without any outside contact.

We have been asked by your teacher to visit your classroom and listen to your conclusions at the end of your unit. We look forward to hearing your findings as you present them to our group, the Ancient World Architectural Review Board (the AWARB).

Sincerely,

The Ancient World Architectural Review Board

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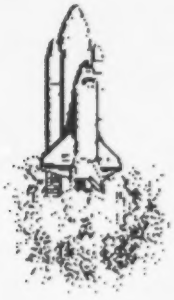
The Ancient World Explorer

SPACE INVADERS, COPYCATS OR INDEPENDENT INVENTORS?



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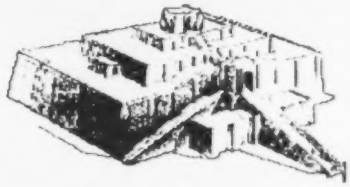

THE TASK:

You will work in a small group and will carefully research the monuments built by the ancient cultures of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China. You will plan a presentation together with others in your group to the Ancient World Architectural Review Board (AWARB) about your own conclusions. This board will ask you to present information and give your opinions on the following:

1. What do these structures look like? What are their dimensions?

2. What materials were used for their construction?

3. How do you think they were they built? What would have been difficult about their construction?

4. Compare and contrast these structures. Do any of them seem to use the same materials? Were they constructed in the same way?

5. Did you find any evidence of contact between any of these cultures?

6. In your opinion, were these structures built by these ancient people in isolation, or did they have help from other cultures or perhaps from more advanced beings from outer space?

(If you wish to study more cultures, you can add the structures of the Maya or the Inca in the Americas. Some scholars hypothesize that ancient people from Africa or Asia may have sailed to the Americas long before Columbus.)

THE PROCESS:

Follow these steps carefully:

A. Your group should begin by dividing up the research tasks. Each student or pair of students within the group should gather information on one of the four cultures and share what is found with the rest of the group.

B. As you do your research, look for information which will help you answer the first three questions for the AWARB. (Keep track of where you got your information, take good notes, download some images, and draw some rough drafts of the structures from the culture you have been assigned.)

C. After you have gathered the information, share your diagrams, images, and information with your group. As a group, discuss the fourth, fifthand sixth questions you will have to answer for the AWARB. Someone in your group should record your ideas.

D. Finally, plan your group presentation to the AWARB. Can you construct some models, posters, or drawings which will illustrate the similarities and the differences between the various monuments you have studied? Is there a way you can present the information which will be well-organized? (Remember that you must give your group's opinion about how these structures were built. Did they have help from space aliens, another culture, or did they do this on their own? There are many possible answers. Even the experts cannot agree!)

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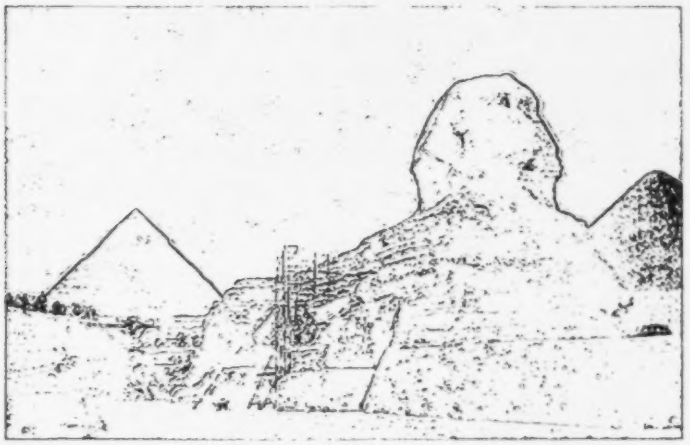

RESOURCES:

There are many resources on the SCORE links which should help you to find the information for your presentation. Someone from your group should visit the sites which are listed for each culture and then information can be compared.

Ancient Egypt

Mark Millmore's Ancient Egyptian Page http://www.eyelid.co.uk/

DIA Galleries: The Ancient Art of Egypt
http://www.dia.org/galleries/ancient/egypt/egypt.html

Color Tour of Egypt http://www.memst.edu/egypt/egypt.html

Guardian's Meidum Homepage
http://www.guardians.net/egypt/meidum/meidum.htm

The Great Temple of Abu Simbel
http://www.wonderclub.com/WorldWonders/AbuSimbelHistory.html

EGYPT has it all! http://touregypt.net/

Ancient Mesopotamia

Archimedia - Architecture in Egypt and Mesopotamia
http://www-lib.haifa.ac.il/www/art/archimedia.html

DIA Galleries: Ancient Art - Mesopotamia
http://www.dia.org/galleries/ancient/mesopotamia/mesopotamia.html

Mesopotamia: The City of Ur
http://www.taisei.co.jp/cg_e/ancient_world/ur/aur.html

Ancient India

Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro http://www.harappa.com/har/har1.html

Architecture of India http://www.indianest.com/architecture/index.htm

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Ancient China

Artof China Homepage/Scenery
http://pasture.ecn.purdue.edu/~agenhtml/agenmc/china/scenery.html

History Time Line for China http://www-chaos.umd.edu/history/time_line.html

Welcome to Xi'an http://www.chinats.com/xi%27an/index.htm

Discovering the Great Wall
http://zinnia.umfacad.maine.edu/~mshea/China/great.html

Xi'an and the Silk Road http://zinnia.umfacad.maine.edu/~mshea/China/xian.html

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Ancient Hebrews

Canaan and Ancient Israel http://www.museum.upenn.edu/Canaan/index.html

Solomon's Temple http://www.solomonstemple.com/index.htm

King Solomon's Temple:

Biblical Account and Commentary*
http://phoenicia.org/temple.html#anchor1055893
*The material on this site was researched, compiled, and designed by
Salim George Khalaf and has a non centrist point of view.

Ancient Greece

Walking Tour of the Acropolis http://www.ancientsites.com/16

3D Reconstruction of Miletus
http://www.ime.gr/fhw/en/projects/3dvr/miletus/index.html

Greek Art and Architecture http://harpy.uccs.edu/greek/greek.html

History of Plumbing on Crete http://www.theplumber.com/crete.html

Sojourn in Greece's Ancient Places http://myron.sjsu.edu/Greece/kgreece/cover.htm

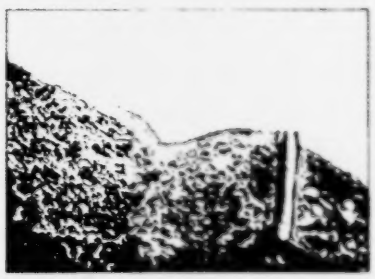
Ancient Rome

Virtual Tour of Rome http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6946/rome.html

Roman Aqueducts http://www.dl.ket.org/latin3/mores/aqua/home.htm

Roman Roads
http://www.ku.edu/history/index/europe/ancient_rome/E/Gazetteer/Periods/Roman/Topics/Engineering/roads/home.html

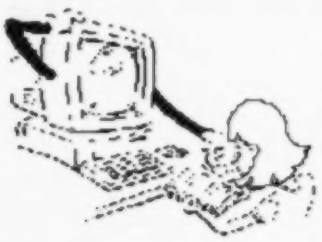
Roman Art and Architecture http://harpy.uccs.edu/roman/html/



To explore the idea of ancient astronauts, you might want to visit Nova Online Hot Science:

Alien Evidence?? http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/alienactivity/

Your social studies textbook should contain very useful information for this activity. There are also CD-ROM or traditional encyclopedias which will help you learn the facts about these ancient structures. Finally, there are also a number of very good books and educational videos on these structures. Look in your school library for books like Pyramid by David Macauley or the Eyewitness Books series on Ancient Egypt or Bible Lands.



LEARNING ADVICE:

You will find that the information from the different web sites will need additional research from other materials.

You will also find it very important to work cooperatively with others in your group because one person cannot find all the necessary information in the time which your teacher has given you to do this work!

Make sure that you use your time wisely in and out of class!

EVALUATION:

You will develop a rubric together with your teacher and the rest of the class to evaluate your group research and presentation. It will include how well you answered the questions listed under "The Task," elements of the organization of information, the presentation itself, and especially your ability to give evidence supporting your opinion.

CONCLUSION:

After you have finished this activity, do the following:

1. Explain why you think monuments and public buildings like the ones you just studied are so important to both ancient and modern cultures.

2. Complete the Web Treasure Hunt on the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World (if you have not already done so.) This is listed under General Resources on the Sixth Grade SCORE Page and will extend your knowledge of these ancient structures to the Greeks and Romans. At the end of the quest, you can nominate your choice for the "wonders" of the modern world.

REFLECTION:

1. What did you learn during this activity that surprised you the most?
2. How well did your group work together? Why is group research important in an activity like this?

3. How did the SCORE sites on the Internet help you complete this activity? Would you use the Internet again to find information?

4. The next time you do an activity such as this, what might you do differently?

5. Did you find some web sites which were not on the SCORE page that you would like to recommend for future students? Submit your recommendation in an email message to SCORE.

Submitted by: Ty Benoit, History Instructor and former middle school teacher, Butte Community College, 3536 Butte Campus Drive, Oroville, California 95965, email tben@cin.butte.cc.ca.us

Last Revised: 11/18/02

NOTES TO THE TEACHER:

Goals/Purpose: Students will compare and contrast the monuments of four ancient cultures and draw conclusions about the origins, construction, and purposes of these structures. (Prior to this activity, it is necessary to teach students how to work collaboratively in small groups, how to access the Internet, and download images. It is also important to stress that they will not find the answers to the last three questions easily but they must compare, contrast, and develop their own conclusions.)

H/SS Academic Content Standards:

Grades 6: Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations...

6.2 Egypt and Mesopotamia

6.4 Hebrews

6.5 India

6.7 / 7.1 Ancient Rome

6.6 / 7.3 China

Grade 7: This lesson provides a useful review of the entire 6th grade curriculum for use at the beginning of the year.

Historical and Social Science Analysis Skills:

Research Evidence and Point of View

1. Students frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research
2. Students distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories.
3. Students distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, essential from incidental information, and verifiable from unverifiable information in historical narratives and stories.
4. Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them.
5. Students detect the different historical points of view on historical events and determine the context in which the historical statements were made (the questions asked, sources used, author's perspectives).

Historical Interpretation

2. Students understand and distinguish cause, effect, sequence, and correlation in historical event including the long- and short-term causal relations.

5. Students recognize interpretations of history are subject to change as new information is uncovered.

Language Arts Standards Grade 7:

Reading Comprehension: Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material: Students understand and analyze the differences among various categories of informational materials (e.g., textbooks, newspapers...) in terms of their structure and purpose; locate information using a variety of consumer, workplace and public documents; identify and trace he development of an author's argument, point of view, or perspective in text; assess the adequacy, accuracy, and appropriateness of the author's evidence to support claims and assertions, noting instances of bias and stereotyping.

Writing Strategies: Students write summaries of reading materials that contain materials' main ideas and most significant details, are written in the student;'s own words, except for material quoted from the source, reflect the underlying meaning of the source, not just the superficial details. Listening and Speaking: Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background interests of the audience: [They] ask probing questions designed to elicit information, including evidence to support the listener' claims and conclusions; respond to persuasive messages with questions, challenges or affirmations; organize information to achieve particular purposes and to appeal to the background and interests of the audience; use explicit techniques for effective presentations, including voice modulation, inflection, tempo, enunciation, and eye contact. Students deliver well-organized formal presentations employing traditional rhetorical strategies: They deliver research presentations that pose relevant and concise questions about the topic, convey clear and accurate perspectives on the subject, include evidence generated through the formal research process, cite reference sources appropriately.

Length: Approximately two-three weeks, depending on how much work is assigned outside of class and how much prior knowledge students have about these civilizations. Invite a local travel agent, architect, or other interested party to be a member of the AWARB and listen to student presentations at the end of the unit. Help students develop their own evaluation criteria about what makes a good presentation and have them evaluate their own performance and participation in the group effort. Include student evaluations, pictures of projects and presentations in their classroom portfolio.

Materials: Poster board and art supplies. s might be encouraged to do their presentations on the computer using Power Point or some other user-friendly presentation software.

Interdisciplinary Connections: Encourage students to investigate the interesting mathematical statistics related to the dimensions of these monuments. Develop vocabulary skills by having students keep a glossary of terms and creating a "learning

log" about what they discover. Connections to scientific study are limitless! (Have you visited NASA's sites on the Web?)

Background Resources for Teachers: Review the SCORE sites, especially the Teacher Resource sites which have searchable databases. (These sites are too advanced for the students but will provide the teacher with much more information.)

Submitted by: Ty Benoit, History Instructor and former middle school teacher, Butte Community College, 3536 Butte Campus Drive, Oroville, California 95965, email tben@cin.butte.cc.ca.us

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